

## EDITORIAL

Welcome back to the pages of *Light*. My sincere apologies for the lack of a second issue in 2014. *Light* is edited voluntarily and I am afraid health problems intervened. I hope you will find the wide range of articles in this edition of interest but because space is always at a premium, I am using this page to concentrate on one particular story to help bridge the gap between our last *Light*, a year ago, and this issue. Here, of necessity in brief, is a recap:

Back then, we featured the first part of a review of the intriguing evidence for possible post-mortem survival following the demise of the giant R101 airship on what was to have been its maiden voyage to India when it crashed in an inferno of flames and heat near Beauvais in France, killing most of the crew and dignitaries aboard. It was October 5 1930.

By coincidence, psychic researcher Harry Price staged a séance at 16 Queensberry Place on October 7 with the highly respected medium Eileen Garrett for journalist Ian Coster in an attempt to contact the recently deceased Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Once in a trance, though, Garrett began to channel dramatic information from an entity claiming to be the captain of the R101, Fl Lt Herbert Irwin, who said the airship should never have taken off because it harboured many defects - which he listed - and maintained he and the crew were forced to fly through political pressure.

Unknown to Price, Maj. Oliver Villiers, an air ministry intelligence office associated with the project, had received what he later claimed to be a psychic message from the dead Irwin pleading for help to be heard because of the guilt he and his crew felt in their post-mortem state. Villiers arranged seven sittings with Eileen Garrett, concealing his identity from her. Although he could not take shorthand, he kept the best notes he could as 'Irwin' and other 'crew members' told their extraordinary tale. Copies of his transcripts are held in the College archives.

The case became one of the most controversial in the history of psychic research and in 1962, Eileen Garrett who continually sought explanations for her mediumship capabilities, commissioned researcher Archie Jarman, to investigate the R101 case. His subsequent report has remained a secret until it was made available in the recently catalogued papers held in the Senate House Library, London, of the eminent Cambridge anthropologist, psychical researcher and skeptic, Eric J. Dingwall, in whose custody Jarman had placed his document.

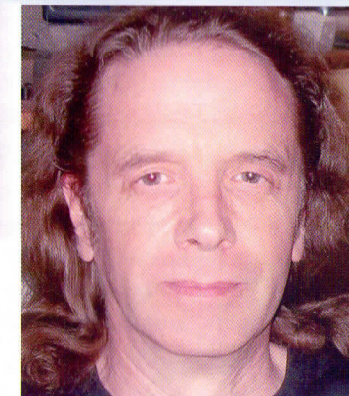
So, in this issue, we assess this latest evidence on the compelling story of the R101 séances, superbly researched and further investigated for us by Steve Hume.

If you no longer have your copy of last year's *Light*, you can revisit it on our website by going to [www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk](http://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk).

Brian Adams

## Part 2 - The R101 Séances in the light of the once-secret Jarman Report

*Researched, written and assessed by Steve Hume*



This is our second major article on the case of the R101 and whether or not it produced evidence of survival. Steve Hume is an accredited Spiritual Healer with the Healing Trust (formerly the National Federation of Spiritual Healers) and has been a member of the Society for Psychical Research since 1992. He gained extensive experience of physical mediumship during the 1990's as a member of a Noah's Ark Society affiliated home circle and contributed many articles to the Ark Review. Steve is an IT Team Leader with a background in Systems Programming in London.

*Please read this article in conjunction with the editorial on page 4*

If you wish to become an 'expert' on rigid airship design, and you are also fascinated by the question of human post-mortem survival and/or ESP, then I could recommend no better course of action than a critical study of the famous R101 case. The reason for this is the appropriateness of a 'paranormal' explanation for the level of technical detail concerning the loss of the world's largest airship on October 5 1930, given by the medium Eileen Garrett only

two days after the event. Garrett was one of the 20th century's most eminent and respected mediums. But, *could* she have gleaned this information by 'normal' means in some fashion? 'By normal means' in this case, could be by actively researching the technical details beforehand. Alternatively, perhaps Garrett had innocently picked them up subliminally from popular press reports, and then they had been dredged up from the depths of her subconscious by the little understood psychological processes of the 'deep trance' state? Naturally, there is also the possibility that some other party could have altered séance transcripts after the event.

The late *Archie Jarman*, a member of the Society for Psychical Research, became such an expert in airship construction for precisely that purpose. Jarman was a man of independent wealth; an author, poet, humorist, pilot, and sometime critical commentator on matters of psychical research. He and his sister, journalist and poet Wrenne Jarman, were close friends of Eileen Garrett'. ▶



*Archie Jarman: Picture courtesy of Psychic News*



In fact, although the Jarman family had connections with Garrett dating back to the 1920's, Jarman had known her closely since the early 1930's - not long after the R101 séances, when he would take her on joyriding flights<sup>2</sup>.

By 1962, when she asked Jarman to compile a report into the R101 case, Garrett, by virtue of extensive, long standing, connections in the literary world, had become a successful New York publisher and editor. She had also, with Frances P. Bolton in 1951<sup>3</sup>, founded the Parapsychology Foundation in America; an organisation devoted to the funding of academic parapsychology.

Jarman had a particularly acerbic style in his writings on psychical research<sup>4</sup> which resembled, in many respects, that of his friends; the eminent Cambridge anthropologist, psychical researcher and skeptic, Eric J. Dingwall; and also the notorious, and much criticised (for highly imaginative and hostile interpretation of 'facts' regarding the paranormal), Trevor H. Hall<sup>5</sup>. Dingwall was an early 'Fellow' of the 'skeptical' organisation, CSICOP (now 'CSI'), although he resigned after just a few years. Dingwall and Hall were both harsh critics of psychic researcher Harry Price<sup>6</sup>, who organised the most famous séance during which Eileen Garrett ostensibly channelled the deceased Captain of the R101, Flight Lieutenant Herbert Carmichael Irwin.

On the face of it, then, if Garrett had any doubts about the validity of the R101 case, or her own role in it, it could be viewed as rather surprising that she should have commissioned Jarman, a critic of psychical research, to carry out a reappraisal of the case. Jarman, like his friend Hall<sup>7</sup>, would shortly be criticised for *overcreative interpretation* of the facts to discredit the field<sup>8</sup>. Shortly after Garrett handed control of her magazine, Tomorrow, to Francis Clive Ross (former Editor of *Light*), with Jarman as an associate editor<sup>9</sup>, he accused one of the key founders of the SPR, F.W.H. Myers, (for rather questionable reasons<sup>10</sup>) of being an unscrupulous philanderer and liar.



Eileen Garrett - a greatly respected medium.

Surely, then, asking Jarman to reassess the R101 case was an act of folly on Garrett's part?

In order to come to such a conclusion, however, one would have to ignore certain facts about Eileen Garrett's own attitude towards mediumship and research into it. She was moderately skeptical of the



Fl.Lt. Irwin - was he speaking through Eileen Garrett after his death?

Spiritualist interpretation of mediumistic phenomena, and also of the approach to the subject of psychical researchers - whether they be critical or sympathetic towards mediumship<sup>11</sup>. She was tactful and understanding in her approach to those who chose to adopt a survivalist stance (especially the bereaved) but she held no prejudice against critics. She had, in her capacity as Founder and President of the Parapsychology Foundation, sometimes authorised funding for research to the most skeptical of researchers<sup>12</sup>.

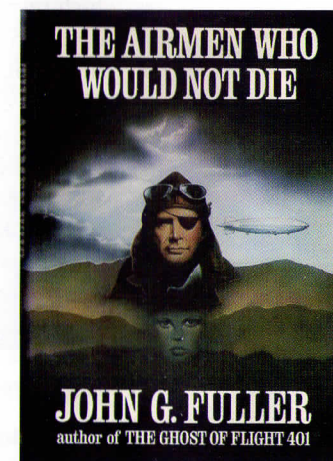
Garrett's career was, in great part, a quest for scientific answers about the psychological mechanisms of her mediumship. She never accepted that her trance 'Controls' were anything other than dissociated aspects of her own mind, and was more than prepared to consider that the information that was relayed via her mediumship, no matter how accurate, *might* be due to either ESP, buried memories (cryptomnesia), or both<sup>13</sup>.

She made no specific claims about the ultimate nature of mediumistic phenomena, and that is why even the most critical researchers (including, of all people, Dingwall who, like Jarman, was one of her oldest friends), held her in such high regard<sup>14</sup>. It is hardly surprising therefore that Garrett chose someone who she felt would look into the case without grace or favour - despite their friendship.

Jarman agreed to Garrett's request, but refused payment so he would not feel under any obligation to reach a positive conclusion<sup>15</sup>. The result was an 80,000 word 'survey' that took six months to compile (to be referred to as *The Jarman Report*, or *The Report*, for present purposes). Yet it remained unpublished. This has led to *The Report* attaining an almost mythical status, leaving skeptics and believers alike to speculate about its contents. The former, of course, seem to have assumed that it contained some damning evidence against Garrett, Harry Price; or at least something to weaken the value of the R101 case as evidence of post-mortem survival. The latter, most notably by John G. Fuller in his book *The Airmen Who Would Not Die*<sup>16</sup>, did the opposite.

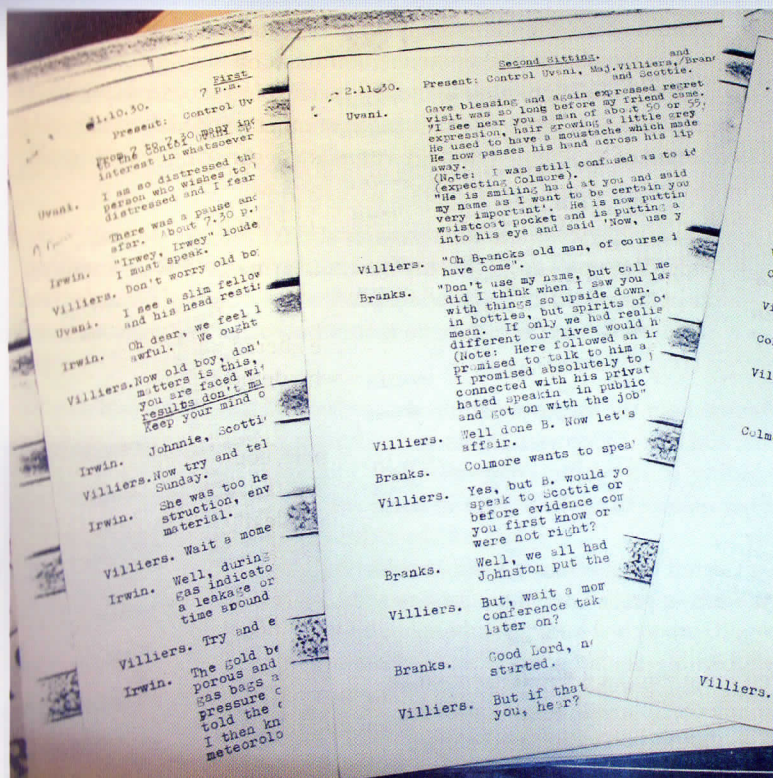
**This factor has caused a great deal of confusion, so it is appropriate to address it at some length whilst discussing *The Report*, now that it is in the public domain, and its conclusions.**

Jarman himself is partly to blame for this muddle. *The Report* contains a letter marked 'Confidential' to Dingwall, in whose 'safekeeping' Jarman entrusted his files. He reveals that, upon its completion, Garrett originally declined to publish because of '...references to living people'<sup>17</sup>. Yet Jarman tells Dingwall that he does not believe this to be the real reason. He suspects that Garrett '...was disappointed that I had not stressed her good mediumship...'<sup>18</sup>. I found this extremely odd, because *The Report* **actually does the exact opposite**. It is easy to see however, why Garrett was so cautious because the documents contain lashing criticism of virtually all of the major witnesses consulted by Jarman, whether they were sympathetic



Front cover of John G Fuller's book





Copies of the Villiers transcripts held in the College archives.

of varying degrees of incompetence<sup>21</sup>.

But Jarman's expert technical witnesses, Wing Commander Tom Cave-Browne-Cave, (involved in the design of the R101) and Squadron Leader Ralph Booth (Captain of the rival R100 airship), are accused of biased hostility to the séances<sup>22</sup>: Cave-Brown-Cave because he had been responsible for, among other things, implementing the very diesel engines that are identified at the séances as being a major factor in the disaster; and Booth because, like Cave-Brown-Cave, he had given evidence at the Official Inquiry which Jarman, along with many others, regarded as being a 'whitewash'. Jarman felt that these men were reluctant to contradict what they may have said there because they both seemed to still have an overriding loyalty to the Air Ministry.

Jarman is even unable to resist taking a satirical dig at Cave-Brown-Cave, commenting that, because he was later Director of Camouflage during World War Two, he was '...thus well-equipped to conceal the truth of the cause of the R.101 disaster but this survey is not the place for such banality'<sup>23</sup>. It would be fair to say that this gave me a belly-laugh (one of several whilst reading *The Report*), but I doubt that Cave-Brown-Cave would have found it that amusing.

In fact, Jarman rejects virtually all of Booth's and Cave-Brown-Cave's analysis of the Price séance communications, although he agrees with their withering assessment of the Villiers material<sup>24</sup>. However, he does the same regarding the opinions of Mr W. Charlton, the R101 ▶

to a paranormal explanation for the case, or hostile.

Major Oliver Villiers, (Senior Assistant, Staff Directorate of The Air Ministry<sup>19</sup>), who conducted a second series of séances with Garrett under a false identity, ostensibly in ignorance of the earlier Harry Price séance, and who believed that the communications were genuine, receives the full weight of Jarman's invective<sup>20</sup>. There is even a mock letter from Jarman to Villiers, wherein Jarman accuses him

Supplies Officer who, anonymously, gave Price help in assessing the data from that séance, accusing him of being a Spiritualist who was not qualified to comment on technical matters<sup>25</sup>. Jarman completely ignores the fact that Charlton was **not** a Spiritualist in 1930, although he became one as a result of the case<sup>26</sup>; and also that he had co-opted other, anonymous, technical staff associated with the R101 in order to make his assessment. Also pertinent here is that these men were received by the hawk-like skeptic Mrs K.M. Goldney, who later compiled the SPR files on the case, at Price's laboratory to give their assessment in Price's absence<sup>27</sup>.

**Even more curious is that, despite his comments about Charlton, Jarman eventually agrees with virtually all of his positive comments.**

But even Goldney, who seems to have thought that Price may have altered the séance transcripts<sup>28</sup> (she questioned his secretary, Price's stenographer, who denied it), also receives a good metaphorical whipping.

In fact, much of what Jarman has to say of these people in *The Report*, could be viewed as libellous - especially in relation to Villiers. Indeed, Jarman even admits as much to Dingwall, and stipulates that *The Report* should not be published until Villiers' death because he would find the report 'wounding'<sup>29</sup>.

Garrett could not have published *The Report* in the form in which Jarman handed it to her personally in 1963. Yet, incredibly, Jarman later sent a version of it to Villiers (minus the derogatory comments), who then contacted Garrett. Garrett then seems to have had a change of heart in consequence, asking for the material to be returned in 1965 with a view to publication. Jarman tells Dingwall that he, in effect, then lied to Garrett, in implying that '... after it had been returned by Villiers, I had destroyed it'. The reason he gives is that he believes that Garrett wished to destroy *The Report* herself, along with any photostat copy that she may have taken of it. Why Garrett should have wanted to do this is completely beyond me, as there is nothing derogatory in *The Report* about her at all.

**Jarman seems to have ended up highly conflicted over the case; reluctant to trust the opinion of anyone, other than himself, associated with it. He comments to Dingwall, re Garrett that, although he considered fraud, '... I frankly think that her paranormal ability was in use at the Price sitting...'**

Leslie Price, College archivist, who knew him, has told me that Jarman could be a volatile character at times; sometimes taking undue offence at innocent comments or misunderstandings that most people would not attach much importance to. And he could respond in a manner that was disproportionately hostile. In 1980, he wrote a rather rambling, and angry piece for *Alpha* magazine<sup>30</sup> about the R101 case and *The Report's* conclusions. The article was oddly self-contradictory, which gave anyone reading the piece ample scope to 'quote mine' i.e. pick the bits that suited their prejudices, whilst ignoring those that didn't.

The end result was that several critics leapt on phrases such as: -

*'Best forget the psychic side (of R101) - it's a dead duck.'*

Only to completely ignore: -

*'I concluded that the source of Eileen's "message" was a mystery...Perhaps the medium obtained ▶*



*information in some telepathic manner from some sitter...or...perhaps the shock of violent death drives the victim to inconsistency or insanity?*

The latter actually reflects *The Report's* conclusions accurately, albeit in veiled fashion i.e. the florid style tends to hide the fact that Jarman had *actually* chosen a paranormal explanation for the case...ESP, although he had not rejected survival as an explanation completely. But he seems to have been particularly stung by John G. Fuller's reference to him in his 1978 book, *The Airmen Who Would not Die*. Fuller's novelistic (yet substantially accurate) account of the R101 affair and events involving Garrett leading up to it, interpreted the facts of the case as being strongly supportive of post-mortem survival. And he had written that Jarman thought that: -

*'...the Harry Price session was almost foolproof and indicated strong evidence of communication with Captain Irwin'*<sup>31</sup>

It is unlikely that Fuller had read *The Report*; although he seems to have had some contact with Jarman. His statement was still a misrepresentation of Jarman's views and the *Alpha* piece seems to have been, in part, Jarman's response. He tears into Fuller's book, pointing out a number of spelling mistakes; although, perhaps tellingly, he falls short of criticising Fuller's overall factual accuracy. In fairness to Fuller he, perhaps, could have been forgiven for this crime given that Jarman had written, in a glowing *Psychic News* obituary for Garrett in 1970:

*'My opinion is that greater credulity is demanded to believe that Eileen obtained her obscure and specialised data by mundane means than to accept that, in some paranormal manner, she had contact with the remembering psyche of the "dead" Captain Irwin...'*

Although Fuller does not cite this edition of *Psychic News* in the bibliography of his book, this is, nevertheless, a pretty strong indication that Jarman was capable of indicating, perhaps unwittingly, that he had more than a little time for the survivalist interpretation of the case. He could well have expressed his views verbally in similar fashion to Fuller, although in the *Alpha* article, he claims to have written to him: -

*'...the less said about the psychic side of the R101 the better.'*

Unfortunately though, the confusion is made worse by the fact that critics seem to have also used Jarman's *Alpha* article to misrepresent his views, as expressed in *The Report*, only in the opposite direction to Fuller.

I was asked to write this reappraisal of the R101 case by *Light* in October last year. By the time I received large sections of *The Report* from professional archivist Walter Meyer zu Erpen, I had already read Jarman's *Alpha* article. I had also consulted a predictably hostile Wikipedia article<sup>32</sup> about Garrett that purports to quote from *The Report*, which struck me as rather strange, given that it has only just become available and the quote in question appeared to have been lifted directly from the *Alpha* piece!

The Wikipedia article attributed the quote to a 2003 book by the skeptic writer and broadcaster, the late Melvin Harris. Also cited in relation to the case was a book by a magician, the late John Booth, who 'considered her [Garrett] to be a fraud'<sup>33</sup>. ▶

The Wikipedia article and its sources are truly slackjawed and dribbling in their lack of informed and intelligent criticism, both of Garrett generally, and the R101 case. Booth, in his 1984 book, *Psychic Paradoxes*, only devotes four pages to the case and cannot even get the date of the disaster right (it was October 5 1930, not October 4). Booth does not mention Jarman and his appraisal of the case. His 'analysis' contains an utterly unsupported (by evidence), and speculative, accusation of fraud against Garrett, and is utterly worthless as a meaningful critique in my view. So I won't waste any more space discussing it here. Any interested readers can find a rather amusing appraisal of it by Psi blogger, and author, Michael Prescott online<sup>34</sup>, along with Prescott's criticism of material by Jenny Randles and Peter Hough, that seems to be based on Jarman's *Alpha* article.

Melvyn Harris' piece (a chapter of around 11 pages) in his book *Investigating the Unexplained* (the source of the Wikipedia 'quote' from *The Report*), is *slightly* better than Booth's, but still contains the astonishing revelation that the technical terms used at the séances are '... commonplace, easily absorbed bits and pieces, or plain gobbledegook'<sup>35</sup>.

I'm afraid I have to disagree with Harris here. For example, I can't remember my late mother ever complaining, in such 'common place' terms, that the 'Disposable lift' in her handbag 'could not be utilised!' (to paraphrase the Irwin entity during the Price séance<sup>36</sup>).

There is much more space here that could be devoted to criticising the rest of Harris' piece, but the crucial point in relation to Jarman is that the misrepresentation of his views could be viewed as worse than Fuller's, being made after Jarman's death, and they could easily be construed as being rather suspicious...

Like Fuller, Harris appears to have had some contact with Jarman, although the fact that Harris only quotes Jarman from the *Alpha* article indicates that he had not discussed the issues with Harris in detail or, maybe, not even at all. In fact Harris admits, towards the end of his R101 chapter: -

*'Regrettably he [Jarman] died the week before I was due to meet him, and go through his research material.'*

That being the case, it is perfectly reasonable to ask how Harris felt justified in attributing the following (unquoted) statement to Jarman in relation to the seemingly inexplicable reference by 'Irwin' at the Price séance, to the R101 flying over Achy, a tiny hamlet (unmarked on road maps) shortly before it crashed at Allonne, near Beauvais:

*'Archie Jarman was easily able to dispose of this enigma. He discovered that Eileen had frequently motored from Calais to Paris in the Twenties. The road she had taken carried her past Achy, which was vividly signposted. So the mysterious reference depended on nothing more than holiday memories triggered off by the Beauvais connection'*<sup>37</sup>.

Really? In *The Report*, Jarman has the following to say about this issue: -

*'It should be mentioned that Achy is on the A1 road; the main road from Calais to Paris. Mrs Garrett may have travelled this road but there is no reason why she should have noted this obscure and very small hamlet - even the bistro is away from the main road, while Beauvais, 12 ½ miles further south, offers many good hotels.'*<sup>38</sup> ▶



It is worth remarking here, that Achy is nowhere near the present A1, which did not even exist, as such<sup>39</sup> at the time that Jarman visited the village in an attempt to interview witnesses to determine whether the R101 had really 'almost scraped the roofs...' there. Achy is certainly not signposted from either the A1 or the present A16, which is substantially nearer (around 20 km away). If Garrett had been driven past Achy south from Calais during the 1920's by someone else, then it would, most likely, have been via the present D901, formerly the RN1 which is only around 500 metres away from the centre of the village.

Of course, Jarman could have discovered something else since he finished his survey in 1963, but I find that extremely doubtful given that he knew Garrett so well. He emphasises elsewhere in *The Report* that the medium could not drive. The only detailed information I could find on Garrett's movements in France, before the disaster, from the biographical information available to me, was her honeymoon on the day of her first marriage, aged 16 in 1909, when she took the famous Dover/Calais Boat Train to Paris<sup>40</sup>.

Garrett's granddaughter, Lisette Coly, recently stated the following, in answer to a query of mine, prompted by the fact that Garrett definitely travelled a great deal from Calais to the French Riviera in later years: -

*"As for EJG...No, she could not drive...and I know for certain she always took the train...as she always wanted me to do also for the view saying in her day she loved seeing "Le Midi" appear when she took the night train, Le Train Bleu...in the morning... viewing the red rocks which appeared out the window heralding arrival on the Riviera."*

Le Train Blue followed the same route as The Boat Train as far as Paris, and appears to have travelled around 20 km east of Achy, via Amiens<sup>41</sup>.

Nevertheless, despite the weaknesses in the critics' arguments, before I received (from Walter Meyer zu Erpen) 181 photographed (out of more than 400) pages of Jarman's documents, containing his conclusions, reasoning, notes and extensive correspondence between himself and various parties; I still expected it to lean on the negative side - in terms of the validity of any paranormal explanation. I was surprised to find, however, that the exact opposite is the case.

Jarman's conclusion is that Garrett most likely obtained the information via ESP. He rejects the theory that she could have obtained the information by 'normal means' saying: -

*"The technical information given at the Price sitting was too orderly and sensible and devoid of absurdities to have emanated from her own brain, since she is quite ignorant of technical matters as displayed."*

Jarman was still claiming this as late as 1970<sup>42</sup>. But he was utterly contemptuous of the later Villiers séances, rejecting them as containing anything evidential of paranormality because 1) Villiers was no stenographer. He had taken brief notes of the communications, fleshing them out the next day, and Jarman did not believe his claim to possess 'total recall'. 2) Jarman rejected this claim of Villiers because, unlike the Price séance, which was documented by an expert stenographer (Price's secretary, Ethel Beenham), the Villiers transcripts contain many ludicrous and embarrassing 'absurdities', with 'Irwin' claiming, for example, that he

had noticed '...the gas indicator going up and down...', when the R101 was fitted with no such instrument<sup>43</sup>. The Villiers 'entities' also claimed that the R101 had crossed the British coast at Deal in Kent, whereas it actually did so at Pett Level, which is around 50 miles to the south west of Deal. 3) Jarman was, understandably, aghast that Villiers, who later became Director of the Special Intelligence Branch of the Ministry of Home Security<sup>44</sup>, had not checked his transcripts for factual accuracy at the time.

Those are far from being Jarman's only objections to the Villiers evidence. But he felt obliged to disregard them as survival evidence because, as he rightly points out, one cannot be sure whether the 'absurdities' originated from the entities themselves, or were the result of Villiers' faulty recollection of what was said by them.

Jarman did point out, however, that if Garrett really *had* been merely regurgitating information from technical documents, or the popular press on the disaster at the Price séance, then one would have expected the quality of information to have either remained consistent, or have *improved* in accuracy. This is because the first of Villiers' seven sittings was over three weeks after the disaster, when press commentary regarding the R101 was becoming a lot more informed. The Price séance took place only two days after the event, and was 'devoid of absurdities'<sup>45</sup>, being somewhat ahead of the detailed post-disaster press accounts. Jarman therefore viewed the Villiers material as being valuable, if in a rather perverse sense, in strengthening the evidential value, in terms of paranormality, of the information obtained with Price.

So what of the integrity of the information relayed at the Price séance? Jarman, as I have mentioned, discounted the theory that Garrett could have gleaned the details by 'normal means'. But, as his extensive collection of press clippings was not included in the extracts I received from Walter and, also, because critics such as Harris had maintained that the information was not kept secret by the Air Ministry, being freely available in the press, I decided to attempt to check this out for myself, just in case Jarman had overlooked something.

I found that, from the many popular press extracts *prior* to the disaster that are available online, the information was almost completely devoid of the details relayed at both the Price and Villiers séances<sup>46</sup> (including, notably, the 'absurdities', in the case of the latter). As Jarman remarks '...the technical data afforded by the press is meagre compared with the communication'<sup>47</sup>. The reason for this is utterly obvious: The British Government was spending huge amounts of cash on this prestige project and was eager for the public not to think that, actually, during the early stages of the Great Depression, they were wasting inordinate sums of taxpayer's cash (in the case of the R101, at least) on a badly designed, inadequately trialled, expensive and luxurious, death trap. All of the official press releases were, therefore, upbeat and glowing.

The only substantial technical information I could find concerning the lamentably under powered, and disproportionately heavy, diesel engines that 'Irwin', at the Price Séance, correctly identifies as being a major probable contributory factor in the disaster, was an article in *Flight* magazine from 1929<sup>48</sup> ...a relatively specialist publication. Although initial teething problems are mentioned and a possible lack of power is hinted at, the reader is told of measures being



taken to rectify this and the overall effect is that all will be well. Jarman also mentions a similar article in *Air* '...current at the time of the crash...' <sup>49</sup>, that drew attention to the dangers of the heavy diesel engines, and an article in *The Daily Telegraph* from Oct 6 (the day before the Price séance) that does the same <sup>50</sup>.

There are also, however, the extensive technical details contained in the books of Naval Architect and engineer, E.F. Spanner published from 1927 to 1929 <sup>51</sup>. Spanner was harshly critical of the airship programme, and even went to the extent of predicting disaster. But, even here, the level of detail falls short in explaining the terms, and the context in which they're used at the Price séance. 'Trim', 'airscrews' and 'elevators' all appear but are not adequately explained for the layman. The engines are barely mentioned, and most of the details concern the R100; Spanner complains at great length about the secrecy surrounding the R101. 'Disposable lift' is also absent (Spanner refers to 'ballast') and 'strakes' is nowhere to be seen. Two notable exceptions are the dangers inherent in the extra weight imparted by rain, and the possibility of dangerous electric charge on an airship building up because of 'friction'.

But, even if the mechanically uninformed Garrett had read these accounts, or had absorbed the details subliminally from conversations with others, then that would still only account for some of the details from the séances.

**Garrett would have had to have put a huge amount of time and energy into actively researching the issues for years (and have had regular meetings with a secret coterie of pipe-smoking airship bores) to have pulled this off.**

**Yet Jarman still chose ESP as the most likely explanation.**

His reasoning struck me as being sound in some respects at first glance. Jarman thought that Garrett had, most likely, pulled the information from the mind of at least one sitter at both the Price séance, and at the later series at which Villiers was the only witness. He thought that this would account, along with Villiers' faulty memory, for the latter being relatively inaccurate... Villiers was no airship man and Jarman reasoned that Garrett was therefore pulling relatively 'muddled' thoughts about the crash from his mind <sup>52</sup> and dramatising them. Moreover, one of the survivors, Foreman Engineer Harry Leech, has been widely quoted since as saying that Irwin told him he was retiring approximately one hour before the crash <sup>53</sup>. Jarman therefore reasoned that Irwin would not have been aware of flying over Achy, or many of the other details of the R101's final moments. I was unable to trace the source of this quote, but I could not help but notice that Leech did not say this at the Official Inquiry, not at least, in the extract of the minutes quoted by Spanner, in his post-disaster assessment. In any case, even if Irwin had said that he was retiring, we cannot be certain that he actually did, and we are in no position to second guess what his mind may have been able to glean in a post-mortem state.

As far as the Price séance is concerned, Jarman chose the journalist, Ian D. Coster, as being the likely telepathic source of the information.

Jarman believed that it was 'quite possible' that Coster had been assigned by *The Evening Standard*, one of the publications he wrote for, to go to the R101's base at Cardington (near Bedford) to obtain any information that he could about possible causes for the crash from the technical staff. Having done that, Coster could have then have taken a ferry to Calais, hired ▶

a car (all the available flights having been commandeered by The Air Ministry investigative team), and have driven around 125 miles to the crash site. On route it would be 'possible' that he stopped at Achy to get directions, and he may have been informed by a resident that the R101 had almost 'scraped the roofs' there. He would then have travelled all the way back in time for the séance in London <sup>54</sup>.

**That's an awful lot to cram in to around 60 hours.**

Still, if Coster *had* been one of the reporters, then we could reasonably expect the details relayed at the séance to have appeared in *The Evening Standard* of either October 6, or October 7 (the day of the séance).

*Having viewed the relevant issues at the British Library myself, I'm afraid that I have to disagree strongly with Jarman that this is the case* <sup>55</sup>. The issue of October 6 contains mainly details from Reuters that quote surviving engineer Leech to the effect that, up until the time of the crash, the ship was '...weathering the storm well and the engines were running quite normally.' <sup>56</sup>, Although there is some mention of Spanner's views, and his warning about the dangers of 'electrical disturbances', and 'losing lift' <sup>57</sup>, (but without the detail and vital context) there are only general observations from the crash scene. And a piece identified as coming from an anonymous *Standard* reporter at Cardington, only gives an account of visiting the bereaved with a priest <sup>58</sup>.

The issue from October 7, which would have probably only have been available, at best, a couple of hours before the séance, only has general observations from witnesses about the R101 flying '...low over the treetops...', and early speculation of the vessel not having been tested properly.

**Neither issue has anywhere near the level of detail given by 'Irwin' at the séance.**

**Jarman states in his conclusions: -**

*'If Coster is eliminated, we have to consider seriously whether Mrs Garrett was in communication with the discarnate "Irwin"...* <sup>59</sup>,

**Quite.**

**In my opinion, *The Jarman Report*, far from weakening the survival hypothesis in relation to the R101 case, actually strengthens it in some respects - on Jarman's own terms.**

*However, there is one other, very important, factor in support of the survival hypothesis that Jarman has almost completely overlooked.*

Flight Lieutenant William H. Wood was an experienced airship pilot who claims to have served with Irwin during the First World war at Mudros airship station in the Aegean. Wood was also a card-carrying militant atheist and rationalist, which is probably why his opinion, as far as I can see, has never been mentioned by skeptic critics of the case. Wood wrote in 1950 of the peculiar style of speech exhibited by 'Irwin' at the Price séance: -

*'...I knew this was exactly his manner of speaking. The highly technical terms...could not have been used or understood by anyone but an airship pilot... This case has absolutely convinced me even if it has not convinced other rationalists. They have been given every opportunity to supply ▶*



a reasonable alternative explanation, but they have failed to do so.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless, I agree with Michael Prescott<sup>61</sup>, that the case still falls short of being 'proof' of survival, at least in a *strictly* scientific sense. Like Prescott, I do not believe that any one spontaneous case of this nature could ever do that on its own. And I feel that we do not know enough about the nature of ESP at present (other than that it appears to occur) to determine what part its unknown mechanisms may have played in this case or any other.

*There is much room for further comment and research. The R101 case is massive in scope, and I have only been able to address a few of the pertinent points in relation to it here. In some respects, it must remain up in the air. Which, tragically, is something that the R101 itself was unable to achieve.* □

+ A copy of our first R101 story from the Winter 2014 edition of *Light* is available from our website at [www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk](http://www.collegeofpsychicstudies.co.uk)

++ The transcript of an R101 message said to have been received via a ouija board featured in our first story has yet to be subjected to independent analysis and scrutiny.

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3. <http://www.parapsychology.org/dynamic/010200.html>
4. See comments of G.W. Fisk re an article of Jarman's published in *Tomorrow*, Winter 1963: *Journal of The Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. 42, No 715, March 1963, pp.28 - 29.
5. See criticism of Hall's book *The Spiritualists* by R.G. Medhurst and K.M. Goldney in 'William Crookes and the Physical Phenomena of Mediumship': *Proceedings of The Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. 54, Part 195, March 1964, pp. 25-157.
6. 'The Haunting of Borley Rectory, A Critical Survey of the Evidence' by Eric J. Dingwall, Kathleen M. Goldney and Trevor H. Hall: *Proceedings of The Society for Psychical Research*, Vol. 51, Part 186, 1956.
7. *Ibid.* 5.
8. See Alan Gauld's criticism of Jarman's comments re Myers made in *Tomorrow* (Winter, 1964) in *Journal for The Society of Psychical Research*, Vol. 42, No. 720, June 1964, pp.316-323.
9. *Journal for The Society of Psychical Research*, Vol. 41, No 714, December 1962, p.427.
10. *Ibid.* 8.
11. See throughout: *Many Voices, The Autobiography of a Medium*, by Eileen J. Garrett; New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1968.
12. 'Fifty Years of Supporting Parapsychology' *International Journal of Parapsychology* Vol.12, No. 2, p .5. Download at: <http://www.parapsychology.org/dynamic/info/PFIJP122Alvarado.pdf>
13. For a good overall view of Eileen Garrett's objective attitude towards her own mediumship and research see *Ibid.* 11, and *Ibid.* 14, throughout.
14. See Dingwall's comments in *Eileen Garrett and the World Beyond the Senses*, by Allan Angoff: New York, Helix Press (2009). pp.138-139. ▸

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16. *The Airmen Who Would Not Die*, by John G. Fuller: New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons (1979).

17. *The R.101 Report (The Jarman Report)*, Eric John Dingwall Papers, Senate House Library, University of London, ref MS912/1/61/2 - MS912/1/61/7. Paragraph 1 of Jarman's covering letter to Dingwall dated 5/5/65.

18. *Ibid.* 17.

19. <http://www.thepeerage.com/p1815.htm>

20. *Ibid.* 17. pp.69-83.

21. *Ibid.* 17. p.306.

22. *Ibid.* 17. p.357.

23. *Ibid.* 17. p.376.

24. *Ibid.* 17. Letter from Booth to Jarman. pp.153-154.

25. *Ibid.* 17. p.358.

26. Letter from Charlton to *Psychic News* where he states that he began his inquiries into 'psychic matters' as a result of the case: *Psychic News*, October 8, 1949, p.5.

27. *Ibid.* 17. p.146. Letter from K.M. Goldney to Oliver Villiers.

28. *Ibid.* 17. p.148. Extract from SPR R101 files: Goldney asks Ethel Beenham if Price 'tinkered' with her transcript of the séance.

29. *Ibid.* 17. Paragraph 5. of Jarman's covering letter to Dingwall.

30. *Alpha*, No.6, Jan-Feb 1980. p.12.

31. *Ibid.* 16. p.293.

32. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eileen\\_J.\\_Garrett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eileen_J._Garrett)

33. *Psychic Paradoxes*, by John Booth: Buffalo, New York, Prometheus Books (1986). pp.163-166.

34. <http://michaelprescott.freesevers.com/r-101.html>

35. *Investigating The Unexplained*, by Melvin Harris: Amherst, New York, Prometheus Books (2003). p.176.

36. Online extract from Price's *Leaves from a Psychist's Case-Book*, which contains the Price Séance transcript and W. Charlton's appraisal of the technical data: <http://www.harrypricewebsite.co.uk/Seance/Garrett/leaves-r101.htm>

37. *Ibid.* 35. p.181.

38. *Ibid.* 17. p.409.

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## Pilgrims on the path to Peru - in their words and pictures



### Gill Matini, College Principal

On Sunday 16 November 2014, twenty people including myself met in Cusco, the Capital of Peru, at the start of our Shamanic Pilgrimage led by College tutor Davina MacKail and Peruvian Shaman Puma Quispe and his wonderful team of shaman. This was the first time that the College had ventured into travel overseas and the start of the journey was tinged with excitement and expectation.

I feel privileged to have been part of this group of College pilgrims; the trip was truly life-changing and at times challenging. I am left with a true affection for each of the people I travelled with; we supported each other, laughed, cried and came home with memories and experiences that will stay with us forever.



### Davina MacKail, Shaman and College Tutor

Why Peru? Some time ago the Dalai Llama purportedly said that the Spiritual energies were moving from Tibet to Peru. Having travelled in both countries extensively I would have to agree simply through what I can feel beneath my feet.

In Tibet, the landscape is harsh and the land feels hard and barren to walk on. In Peru, the climate is equally harsh and there are many remote mountain plains of limited habitation. Yet, to walk across these plains is to deeply connect to the sweet softness of Pachamama, our Earth Mother. She literally bounces beneath your feet; you feel you can sink into her and as a result you feel held, nurtured and fed by her.

Perhaps it is this Earth connection that the Dalai Llama was referring to. The basic cosmology of the Andes also reflects this honouring of the land. This daily honouring and recognition of Mother Earth to a Peruvian is as natural as breathing to us. It is a daily, continual practice that re-natures us – the Apus (mountains) and enormous landscapes simply will not allow us to forget our relationship with the greater natural Cosmos around us.

The Andeans also openly live the understanding that “nothing ever goes one way”. This belief fosters good relations with all our relations on the planet. These are just two of the formative principles of Peruvian cosmology that allows us to re-member and re-connect to that authentic core of who we truly are. Gathering knowledge and developing practices are useful tools in our Spiritual development.

But actually experiencing this cosmology for ourselves by undertaking a pilgrimage of immersion in the indigenous shamanic teachings of the Q'ero Indians, direct descendants of the Inca does indeed change our perceptual reality and allow us to incorporate these teachings into our daily lives creating profound, positive transformations. ▽



43. *Ibid.*20.

44. *Ibid.*19.

45. *Ibid.*17.p.70.

46. [http://virtuallibrary.culturalservices.net/webingres/bedfordshire/vlib/0.digitised\\_resources/cardington\\_airships.htm#r101\\_newspaper](http://virtuallibrary.culturalservices.net/webingres/bedfordshire/vlib/0.digitised_resources/cardington_airships.htm#r101_newspaper)

47. *Ibid.*17. p.400.

48. See page 1094 at: <http://www.flightglobal.com/pdfarchive/view/1929/1929-1%20-%201311.html>

49. *Ibid.*17.p.370.

50. In *The Report* Jarman states that *The Air* magazine comments re the engines are quoted in *The Daily Telegraph* of October 7, 1930 (the day of the Prices séance), (*Ibid.*17.p.370) the details are actually in the October 6 issue - p.8.

51. *This Airship Business*, by E.F. Spanner. London: Williams and Norgate Ltd. (1927); *Gentleman Prefer Aeroplanes*, by E.F. Spanner. London: E.F. Spanner (1928); *About Airships*, by E.F. Spanner. London: E.F. Spanner (1929).

52. *Ibid.*17.p.403.

53. *The Millionth Chance*, by James Leasor. Kelly Bray, Cornwall: House of Strauss (1957, 2001), p.143. For Leech's account at the Official Inquiry see PDF of *Report of the R.101 Inquiry* p.74. available at <http://lordkingsnorton.cranfield.ac.uk/archive%20docs/r101.pdf>. Also *The Tragedy of the "R101"* Vol. II, by E.F. Spanner. London: E.F. Spanner (1931) p.106.

54. *Ibid.*17.pp405-407.

55. *The Evening Standard*, October 6 and October 7, 1931.

56. *The Evening Standard*, October 6, p.1.

57. *Ibid.*56.p.7.

58. *Ibid.*56.p.17. For the further details see *The Evening Standard* of October 7, p.1.

59. *Ibid.*17.p.412a.

60. *Brighton and Hove Gazette*, Saturday February 18, 1950. Letters page,

61. *Ibid.*34.

### Further Reading

*Slide Rule*, by Neville Shute. London: Vintage (2009). First published in 1954. Shute was Chief Calculator and Deputy Chief Engineer on the rival R100. He gives a negative account of the secrecy surrounding the R101's construction, and the political demands made of her crew.

*Airship Design, Development and Disaster*, by John Swinfield. London: Conway (2012). A good history of airships and the extreme danger inherent in flying in them. The appendix contains extensive extracts from the 'lost' diaries of R101 First Officer, Noel Atherstone, in which he complains about the inadequacies of the ship and political pressure from the Air Ministry on Irwin and the whole crew. The existence of the diary was revealed at the Villiers séances by 'Atherstone', but it did not surface until after *The Jarman Report* was compiled.

Ed - You will find visuals of the R101 at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) - including take off on its disastrous flight. ▣